

León's poetry, and seems less insistent here than in *Studies of the Spanish Mystics*. There are, in addition, two essays on Cervantes and a sketch of the late Dom Edmund Gurdon. The collection makes an interesting and informative book.

EDWARD SARMIENTO

EXISTENTIALISM FROM WITHIN. By E. L. Allen. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 18s.)

In spite of its unfortunate title, Dr Allen's book is perhaps the most respectable of the many recent contributions to the secondary literature of Existentialism in this country. The analysis and criticism of the chief representatives of the movement, Heidegger, Sartre, Jaspers, Marcel, is presented as a developing sequence, the 'journey' as a 'pilgrimage', from 'atheist humanism to faith in God' (p. 180). The emphasis on this theme of personal salvation has not allowed Dr Allen (as he acknowledges) to do full justice to Heidegger, surely the most important of the four philosophers; and it is surprising to see the writer pay such serious attention to Jaspers, without, however, making the generalities of this philosopher less insipid.

Yet a more radical criticism of Dr Allen's book is that it remains a study—precisely from *without*—of four Existentialist philosophers and is not itself an essay in Existentialist philosophy. The characteristic seriousness of the writers of this movement, variously registered as *Angst*, fidelity, commitment, engagement and so on, is an effort of personal and moral exploration and not in principle (or even sometimes in fact) an intellectual seriousness: consequently the summary exposition, however sympathetic, of 'doctrines' inevitably lacks the proper vitality, the sense of growth, of the original writings. If, like Dr Allen, one is not concerned to evaluate philosophical investigations from a standpoint itself claiming at least the possibility of total intellectual illumination, but only to be more or less illuminatingly immersed in mystery, then one has the very heavy responsibility of profoundly engaging the reader in this mystery; and it cannot be allowed that Dr Allen has satisfactorily acquitted himself of this responsibility. It should be noted here that if Dr Allen can write, 'The evidence available in the Gospels seems to me to put beyond doubt that Jesus thought of himself as a man dependent on God' (p. 142), his claim to offer a *Christian* approach to Existentialism is at least questionable.

C.E.

CHRISTIANITY. By S. C. Carpenter, D.D. (Penguin Books; 2s.)

In one hundred and eighty pages, Dr Carpenter, formerly Dean of Exeter, has attempted to describe 'Christianity'. It is not surprising that, in spite of much that is good in the book and of a temper markedly